

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A method for desulfurizing ~~hydrocarbon oils~~ kerosene or gas oil comprising:

reacting sulfur compounds in a kerosene or gas oil containing aromatic hydrocarbons and at least one sulfur compound selected from the group consisting of thiophene compounds, benzothiophene compounds, and dibenzothiophene compounds among themselves and/or with aromatic hydrocarbons by bringing the kerosene or gas oil into contact with a ~~a hydrocarbon oil containing at least one sulfur compound selected from the group consisting of thiophene compounds, benzothiophene compounds, and dibenzothiophene compounds into contact with a zeolite selected from the group consisting of proton type faujasite zeolite, proton type mordenite and proton type β zeolite, and having the silica/alumina ratio of 100 mol/mol or less and the content of cations other than proton of 5 mass % or less, and/or a solid superacid catalyst selected from the group consisting of sulfated zirconia, sulfated alumina, sulfated tin oxide, sulfated iron oxide, tungstated zirconia, and tungstated tin oxide,~~ wherein desulfurization occurs by the sulfur compounds reacting among

themselves and/or with aromatic hydrocarbons followed by adsorption desulfurization by bringing the sulfur compounds into contact with the superacid catalyst in the absence of hydrogen for the adsorption desulfurization after the reaction among sulfur compounds themselves or the reaction of sulfur compounds with the aromatic hydrocarbons.

2. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the kerosene or gas oil ~~hydrocarbon oil further contains aromatic hydrocarbons and sulfur compounds contained in the hydrocarbon oil are reacted among themselves and/or with aromatic hydrocarbons by bringing the hydrocarbon oil~~ is brought into contact with a the zeolite selected from the group consisting of proton-type faujasite zeolite, proton-type mordenite and proton-type β -zeolite, and having the silica/alumina ratio of 100 mol/mol or less and the content of cations other than proton of 5 mass % or less, and ~~or~~ the solid superacid catalyst.

3. (currently amended) The method according to claim 2, wherein the sulfur compounds in the ~~hydrocarbon oil~~ kerosene or gas oil and heavy sulfur compounds produced by the reaction among the sulfur compounds contained in the ~~hydrocarbon oil~~ kerosene or gas oil and/or by the reaction of the sulfur compounds with aromatic hydrocarbons are adsorbed by the zeolite and/or the solid superacid catalyst.

4. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the ~~hydrocarbon oils~~ are kerosene or gas oil is desulfurized to a content of the total sulfur compounds (as sulfur) of 1 ppm or less.

5-8. (cancelled).

9. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the solid superacid catalyst has a specific surface area of 100 m²/g or more.

10. (cancelled).

11. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the ~~hydrocarbon oil~~ kerosene or gas oil contains aromatic hydrocarbons as major components.

12. (original) The method according to claim 11, wherein the aromatic hydrocarbon is at least one hydrocarbon selected from the group consisting of benzene, alkylbenzene having 7-14 carbon atoms, naphthalene, and alkyl naphthalene having 11 - 18 carbon atoms.

13. (cancelled).

14. (currently amended) The method according to claim ~~13~~ 1, wherein the kerosene or gas oil is desulfurized in a fuel cell vehicle in which kerosene or gas oil is used as an on-board reforming fuel.

15-17. (cancelled).

18. (currently amended) The method according to claim 2, wherein the ~~hydrocarbon oils are~~ kerosene or gas oil is desulfurized to a content of the total sulfur compounds (as sulfur) of 1 ppm or less.

19. (currently amended) The method according to claim 3, wherein the ~~hydrocarbon oils are~~ kerosene or gas oil is desulfurized to a content of the total sulfur compounds (as sulfur) of 1 ppm or less.

20. (cancelled)